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Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2363 (2017), by which the Council extended the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) until 30 June 2018 and requested me to report, every 60 days, on its implementation. The report provides an update on and analysis of the conflict, the political situation and the operational environment in Darfur and the main challenges to the effective implementation of the mandate, including violations of the status-of-forces agreement, for the period from 15 October until 15 December 2017. It also presents the steps taken by UNAMID towards achieving its benchmarks and provides an update on progress in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of UNAMID (S/2017/437).

II. Conflict analysis

2. While the reporting period did not witness any armed clashes between the forces of the Government of the Sudan and the Darfur armed groups, the initiation of the mandatory stage of the weapons collection campaign across Darfur and its launch in the camps for internally displaced persons created new dynamics. In addition, the start of the migration season continues to generate violence among communities, although at lower levels than in previous years. No tangible progress was noted in the Darfur political process, nor in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The level of displacement remained the same as in the previous reporting period, with the number of returnees insignificant, while the number of refugees from South Sudan to Darfur reached 192,826, with over 89,000 arriving in 2017 to East, North and South Darfur.

Fighting between the Government of the Sudan forces and armed groups

3. The armed groups of the Sudan Liberation Army Minni Minawi (SLA/MM) and the Gibril Ibrahim faction of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM/Gibril) remained largely inactive in Darfur, while the area of operations of the Sudan Liberation Army Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) continued to be limited to pockets of the Jebel Marra amid reports of further fragmentations and involvement in acts of banditry. UNAMID reported clashes between a suspected dormant cell of JEM and

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Sudanese Armed Forces/Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in Birkat Saira area, 25 km east of Saraf Omra, on 22 November, in the context of the weapons collection campaign, which resulted in the capture of 16 rebels. A clash also took place in Feina, north-east of Kass, on 21 October, when SLA/AW reportedly encroached an area controlled by a splinter group.

4. Amid continued disagreements on reaching a permanent ceasefire, SLA/MM, JEM/Gibril and Sudan Liberation Movement/Transitional Council (SLM/TC) extended their unilateral cessation of hostilities until 31 January 2018.

Weapons collection campaign and impact on security

5. The initiation of the second phase of the mandatory collection of weapons as of mid-October has de facto strengthened the control of RSF over the security situation in Darfur, while expanding the scope of the campaign to the camps for internally displaced persons. In this context, Government forces defeated the Savanna militia group, composed mainly of Southern Rizeigat, after clashes in Kutum, North Darfur, on 23 October, then in Shearia, East Darfur, on 30 October, and finally in Korma area, North Darfur, on 10 November, where they captured its leader, Abdallah Rizkallah, and nine militia. On 26 November, 14 RSF and nine border guards were killed, following a reported ambush against RSF by the border guard units under the command of Musa Hilal. RSF eventually arrested Musa Hilal in his stronghold of Misteriya, North Darfur, and transferred him to Khartoum.

6. In the same context, the Government is reasserting control over the camps for internally displaced persons, including settlements that, to date, had been considered out of their reach. On 2 November, in an apparent show of force, its security forces entered parts of the Kalma camp in South Darfur, with dozens of gun trucks and anti-personnel carriers. Subsequently, the Joint Special Representative held two meetings with the Second Vice-President of the Sudan and with the Governor of South Darfur, on 9 and 14 November, which resulted in the establishment of a trilateral committee composed of the internally displaced persons, the state government and UNAMID, to oversee the collection of weapons in Kalma camp as of 10 December. No incidents have been reported to date.

7. In several camps for internally displaced persons in Central Darfur, namely, North and Straina camps in Nertiti area, and Hasahisa, Hamidiya Khamsa and Dagayeg in the Zalingei area, and surrounding areas comprising of Orokom Fatnakaral and Tamar Boljimail villages, the communities expressed concern about the involvement of RSF in the disarmament campaign and requested UNAMID presence during the conduct of the exercise.

Intercommunal conflicts

8. The start of seasonal migration in October was marked by a higher number of fatalities and an increase in criminality, notably in North and West Darfur. During the period under review, three intercommunal clashes occurred, resulting in 45 fatalities, compared with eight clashes, resulting in 19 fatalities, reported during the previous period. All the clashes were attributable to disputes over livestock, criminality and revenge attacks. Some farming communities requested protection from RSF to prevent potential clashes with migrating herders. In October, following clashes between the Ma'aliya and the Rizeigat in East Darfur, the Sudanese Armed Forces were withdrawn and replaced by RSF in the buffer zone between the two groups.

9. Communal tensions were reported in West, North and South Darfur. In West Darfur, subclans of the Rizeigat (Awlad Id, Awlad Zaid and Ereigat) clashed with the Zaghawa on 17 October in Hatam village (25 km south-east of Kulbus town), over the ownership of camels, which resulted in the deaths of 16 Zaghawa and 11 Rizeigat.

The Sudan-Chad joint border forces were deployed to contain the violence. In North Darfur, following the killing of two Mahariya on 18 October, the kinsmen of the deceased traced the perpetrators to Umm La'ota village (9 km north-west of Kabkabiyah town), where two Mahariya and two Tama were killed during the ensuing clashes. The authorities, in collaboration with RSF, managed to contain the situation. In South Darfur, the Salamat and the Fallata clashed on 24 October over cattle rustling in the Dejaj area (55 km west of Graida) in which four Fallata, including two women, and five Salamat men were killed.

10. The annual migration of nomadic herders, which usually coincides with the harvest season, was marked by an increase in criminality in the areas of El Fasher, Kabkabiyah, Kutum and Tawilah in North Darfur as well as El Geneina and Masteri in West Darfur, increasing tensions between farmers and herders. On 25 October, the crop protection committee in Khazan Jadid, East Darfur, reported rising tensions between farmers and herders in the western areas due to large numbers of the Baggara and the Abbala migrating north to south. In South Darfur, on 27 October, a group of armed nomads attacked Fallata and Fur returnees in Funguli village, 54 km north-west of the team site at Menawashei, in East Jebel Marra locality, killing five and injuring several others. There were also reports of armed nomads destroying farms in Shangil Tobaya, North Darfur, on 29 October.

11. In the meantime, positive developments took place on two outstanding conflicts in South and East Darfur. On 29 October, the Salamat and the Habbaniya held a forum on peaceful coexistence in Buram, South Darfur, where they signed a reconciliation agreement, following the cessation of hostilities agreement of 12 May 2017. On 2 November, the state government facilitated exchange visits for the Habbaniya to Nadeif and the Salamat to Buram, as a confidence-building measure. On 30 October, the Government released nine Rizeigat and four Ma'aliya leaders who were arrested in July following intercommunal fighting and other criminal activities.

Violence against civilians and human rights violations

12. Despite the reduction in armed clashes and a decrease in the number of human rights violations, the overall human rights situation remains of concern. There were 58 cases of human rights violations and abuses, involving 123 victims, including 18 minors, compared to 72 cases, involving 253 victims, including 16 minors, during the previous reporting period. Arbitrary arrests and illegal detention accounted for three cases, involving 24 victims. Violations of the right to life accounted for 11 cases, involving 17 victims, violations of the right to physical integrity (assault) accounted for 31 cases, involving 64 victims, and abductions accounted for two cases, involving five victims. UNAMID confirmed the occurrence of 40 cases of human rights violations and abuses, involving 77 victims, while the remaining 18 cases, involving 50 victims, could not be verified owing to various factors, including local access restrictions. Of the 58 reported cases, eight cases, involving 34 victims, were reportedly perpetrated by Government armed forces and military intelligence, the National Intelligence and Security Service and RSF, two cases involving, two victims, were reportedly perpetrated by male civilians and the remaining 46 cases, accounting for 85 victims, were allegedly perpetrated by unidentified armed men. Investigations were initiated in 26 of the documented cases, resulting in 11 arrests.

13. There were 11 cases of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, in the form of rape, involving 13 victims, including 9 female minors. UNAMID continued to highlight the negative impact of sexual violence on the lives of women, especially young girls, and the need for action on the part of the Government to combat violence against women. Sustained emphasis was placed on the need for unfettered access to sites of alleged incidents in order to interview victims

and document cases, as well as to facilitate medical care and psychosocial support for victims so as to avert long-term negative health implications, especially on minor girls.

14. Communities of internally displaced persons were also subject to security-related incidents in Darfur. They were the target of 123 criminal incidents, which led to eight fatalities. Other civilians were affected by 208 crime-related incidents, resulting in 42 fatalities, including cases of murder (32), armed robbery (22), attempted robbery (2), assault/harassment (60), burglary/break-in (3), looting (1), abduction (7), shooting (52), threat of violence (3), livestock theft (12), arson (1) and other crimes (13). In the previous reporting period, internally displaced persons were affected by 45 criminal incidents, resulting in six fatalities, and other civilians were affected by 73 criminal incidents, resulting in 10 fatalities.

III. Political situation

15. The Darfur peace process remains stalled, while voices for reform at the national level are becoming more outspoken in this regard. On 16 October, the leader of the Sudan Liberation Army/Zurg (SLA/Zurg), Nour al-Din Zurg, who signed a peace agreement with the Government in 2016 and participated in the national dialogue, suspended his participation in the Darfur peace process, alleging that the Government had reneged on its commitments to the agreement, which included his appointment to a senior military rank. Similarly, the Justice and Equality Movement/Dabajo (JEM/Dabajo), a signatory to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, on several occasions raised concerns regarding the slow pace of integration of its forces into the regular forces, as well as the level of the movement's representation in the Government of National Unity.

16. During the reporting period, the Government took steps to revitalize the commissions and the Darfur Reconstruction and Development Fund of the Darfur Peace Follow-up Office (which took over responsibility for the implementation of the Doha Document after the closure of the Darfur Regional Authority). On 25 October, the Second Vice-President of the Sudan, Hassabo Mohamed Abdul-Rahman, and the head of the Darfur Peace Follow-up Office, Magdi Khalafalla, held discussions on the implementation of the Doha Document, the status of the Commissions and the Fund, and the reported returns of some refugees from Chad to North, Central and West Darfur. On 11 November, the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission, other Government officials and officials from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) visited Abéché, in Chad, to commence the implementation of the tripartite agreement signed between the Sudan, Chad and UNHCR in Khartoum, in May 2017, on the legal protection of and assistance to refugees who wish to voluntarily return to the Sudan. In the same context, the Commission surveyed Wadi Salih, Azum, Um Dukhun and Bindisi localities in Central Darfur and Tine locality in North Darfur, as potential areas of return.

17. At the regional level, the Sudan's improved relations with its neighbours have resulted in decreasing support for the Darfur armed movements. The two-day visit to Khartoum by the President of South Sudan, Salva Kiir, on 1 and 2 November, focused on bilateral cooperation on security, political, trade and economic-related matters. On 13 and 14 November, the President of the Sudan, Omar Hassan al-Bashir, visited Uganda to discuss bilateral trade, immigration and security-related issues with the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, who has encouraged the Darfur rebel groups to join the peace process. During a visit to Chad on 1 and 2 December, the President of the Sudan and the President of Chad, Idriss Déby Itno, discussed bilateral relations and noted the positive impact of the weapons collection campaign on regional security.

IV. Humanitarian situation

18. During the reporting period, there were no additional displacements. New cases of acute watery diarrhoea were registered, but there was a significant reduction in the number of cases and deaths. Between August 2016 and 25 November 2017, a total of 5,537 cases were registered, resulting in 242 deaths, although for the reporting period, there were only 30 cases, resulting in one death.

19. Regarding food security, the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification indicates that parts of North Darfur are experiencing dry spells, which may subsequently affect overall agricultural production and water and pasture availability. In addition, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, cereal prices are higher than last year and the recent four-year average across several markets in Darfur. While access to food has improved among internally displaced persons and poor households in Jebel Marra, limited agricultural labour opportunities and low asset holdings will continue to limit household productive capacity. The most affected households will continue to face acute food insecurity (phase 3 — crisis, according to the Classification) between October 2017 and January 2018.

20. Developments in South Sudan continue to have an impact on the humanitarian situation in Darfur. As of 15 December, nearly 192,826 South Sudanese were hosted across the Darfur states. About 17 per cent of the refugees live in two East Darfur refugee camps managed by UNHCR and Government counterparts, while the majority are sharing resources with host communities and internally displaced persons in over 30 locations. Although host communities have largely welcomed the refugees and peacefully co-exist with them, basic services and natural resources are overstretched in most areas and this needs to be addressed so as to avert possible conflicts over resources.

V. Operating environment

21. While humanitarian access continued to improve across Darfur, there was an increase in criminal incidents and aviation restrictions. Delays in the issuance of visas, in particular for human rights personnel, continued to hamper the work of UNAMID and the backlog of containers at the port of entry has also not yet been fully resolved.

Attacks and threats of attack

22. A total of 35 criminal incidents targeting United Nations and humanitarian personnel were reported, compared to 23 in the previous reporting period. Of those incidents, 27 involved attempted intrusions into UNAMID premises (26 at Nyala "super camp", South Darfur, and one at Ed Daein "super camp", East Darfur), resulting in the theft of valuables and cash belonging to a UNAMID police officer and an attempted robbery at the asset container in Nyala Super Camp. On 14 November, in Kutum, North Darfur, a Swiss national working with the Children's Nutrition Hospital in El Fasher, who was kidnapped on 7 October, was released unharmed after 38 days in captivity.

Access restrictions

23. Humanitarian access continued to improve in Darfur, although the implementation of the Government's directives and procedures for humanitarian action remained inconsistent. Some delays were reported in processing interstate travel notifications and humanitarian partners continue to work with the Government at both the federal and state level to further improve this process. The humanitarian community in South Darfur continued to advocate for access to additional locations

in East Jebel Marra, including areas outside of Government control. Plans to access parts of East Jebel Marra are also contingent on a security risk assessment.

24. Sudanese authorities continued to limit the mission's direct flights between team sites in different states and allowed a limited window for air operations hours. Further, the use of El Obeid Airport, which is the best alternative for regular flights to Khartoum in the event of emergencies, continued to be restricted. In addition, the mission was denied access twice to Misteriya, following the clashes between RSF and the border guards of Musa Hilal, before being allowed to visit the area on 6 December.

Visas and customs clearance

25. The Government granted 413 visas for UNAMID, including 33 for military personnel, 173 for police personnel, 118 for official visitors, 67 for contractors, 1 for a consultant, 9 for international staff and 12 for dependents. A total of 293 visa requests have been pending beyond the normal period of 15 days, some of them since June 2016. These include 42 for police, 118 for contractors, 63 for official visitors, 26 for military personnel, 31 for civilian staff, 2 for consultants and 11 for United Nations Volunteers. The vacancy rate for the Human Rights Section remains unchanged at 44 per cent, while 3 per cent of vacancies (of the overall 18 per cent vacancy rate) for the mission's international civil staff is attributable to pending visas.

26. The Government progressively released food ration containers from Port Sudan. Currently, 50 shipments remain pending, two of which, containing an armoured personnel vehicle and 10 water trucks, have been pending since 2015. The delays have resulted in demurrage charges and other costs associated with the inspection and repair of equipment being incurred by troop- and police-contributing countries. After the current financial year ends in December, the Government will communicate with UNAMID regarding the new processes and procedures that have replaced the Sea Ports Corporation.

27. The Government continued to prevent UNAMID from printing hard copies of its quarterly *Voices of Darfur* magazine and distributing the annual comic booklets on the mission's mandate. Despite the mission leadership's formal and informal interventions, the Government has still not reversed both directives, which negatively affect UNAMID ability to effectively inform the host community of its activities.

VI. Progress towards achievement of the strategic objectives of the mission

Protection of civilians

28. Integrated field protection teams conducted 68 missions in North Darfur, 40 in West Darfur and 10 in Central Darfur. In North Darfur, those teams conducted eight visits to Korma camp for internally displaced persons and five visits to the surrounding areas of Korma market, and Tagber, Kunkule, Dixma, Tawilah and Miro villages. The teams also conducted daily patrols to Umm Baru farming areas (Abduleha, Musbat, Shegue-Karo, Furawiyah and Jurajeem) and Umm Baru camp for internally displaced persons to follow up on the impact of the mandatory phase of the Government's collection of weapons campaign and the reaction of the border guard forces located in Kutum and Kabkabiyah to that campaign. The team also undertook four patrols to the abandoned villages of Orchi, Dolbe and Kurbia.

29. In Central Darfur, the integrated field protection teams visited North and Straina camps for internally displaced persons in Nertiti area, and Hasahisa, Hamidiya Khamsa and Dagayeg in the Zalingei area, and surrounding areas comprising of Orokom, Fatnakaral and Tamar Boljimail villages to follow up on issues related to

the seasonal migration and the weapons collection campaign. In West Darfur, the teams visited Sharib, Tajuna, Gokar, Tatarona, Fufu, Hashabah, Afandi, Tandusa, Nuri, Umkadosa, Shatok, Um Sebeikha, Jokhan, Tanjeki, Amar Jaded, Amar Allah Birtaguna, Ojeje and Misselime villages, regarding similar matters.

30. The military component of UNAMID conducted a total of 13,623 patrols, of which 6,856 were for the protection of civilians (4,827 short-range patrols, 344 long-range patrols and 1,685 night patrols), 233 were for humanitarian escorts, and 6,534 patrols were for the protection of mission personnel and equipment (5,663 routine patrols and 871 logistics and administrative escorts). The police component of UNAMID conducted a total of 4,177 patrols, including 1,921 confidence-building patrols to camps for internally displaced persons, 528 patrols to respond to the security needs of internally displaced persons, particularly women and children engaged in livelihood activities outside camps, 240 market patrols, 801 village patrols, 609 town patrols, 15 area-of-return patrols and 63 migration patrols. In addition, 195 joint patrols, involving 470 male and 153 female community police volunteers, were conducted as part of crime prevention initiatives.

31. UNAMID uniformed personnel provided 316 round-trip escorts for humanitarian partners, in support of the delivery and monitoring of humanitarian assistance, as well as inter-agency verification assessments, distribution and monitoring of food and non-food items and operational activities. In addition, UNAMID continued to provide daily escorts to humanitarian water, sanitation and hygiene partners for water-trucking from Kube to Sortony gathering site for internally displaced persons in North Darfur, which hosts over 21,500 persons, as well as regular armed escorts, twice a week, for humanitarian supplies between Sortony and Kabkabiyah in North Darfur. Under special arrangements with the World Food Programme (WFP), UNAMID armed escorts facilitated one WFP logistics convoy of eight trucks, carrying 154 tons of food items to Tawilah, North Darfur, and continued to provide security for WFP warehouses in El Fasher and Sortony.

32. In addition to ensuring security and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance, UNAMID also supported voluntary returns. In Shataya locality, South Darfur, where state authorities and native administration have reportedly negotiated the return of 97 per cent of land to the legal owners, with the assistance of the office of the Prosecutor, UNAMID, through its quick-impact and community stabilization projects, has supported the establishment of security and rule of law institutions and the provision of some public services in that locality, with the construction and rehabilitation of a police station, local court, prosecutor's office, secondary school and water pumps. On 24 November, the Joint Special Representative handed over those facilities to South Darfur authorities and the beneficiaries.

33. UNAMID continued to work with the transitional justice and human rights institutions established under the Doha Document, with a view to strengthening their capacity to promote and protect human rights in Darfur. UNAMID, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the Advisory Council for Human Rights of the Sudan, organized a four-day workshop for 50 participants on the implementation of the recommendations on transitional justice made by the Human Rights Council through the universal periodic review, in El Fasher, which began on 25 October. The representative of the Ministry of Justice participating in the workshop informed participants that the Sudan had accepted 184 of the 244 recommendations made by the Council and urged the advancement of the implementation process of the universal periodic review recommendations. A one-day training workshop was also conducted in El Fasher, North Darfur, for 35 participants (including 23 women) from the Federal Society of Disabled Persons, to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

34. UNAMID facilitated the participation of the Director General of Sudan Prison Development and Reform and two senior prison officers in a five-day conference of the International Corrections and Prisons Association for the Advancement of Professional Corrections, held in London. A training on human rights laws and standards, and the rights of people in detention, was organized in West Darfur on 8 November, to support capacity-building and skills development of newly recruited government prison officers at Ardamata prison.

35. During the reporting period, the mission trained 180 serving prison officers (from across the five states of Darfur) and 200 newly recruited prison officers (from North Darfur), on compliance with international detention and prisons standards. Similarly, on 8 and 9 November, in Nyala, South Darfur, 20 prosecutors and Government of the Sudan police were trained on investigation and prosecution under the criminal laws of the Sudan, international fair trial standards, the investigation and prosecution of cases of sexual and gender-based violence and legal issues and procedures related to juvenile cases. The mission was also given access to prisons and other places of detention to undertake monitoring and advise the prison authorities on international human rights standards and the treatment of prisoners.

36. UNAMID has begun discussions with the newly established Public Prosecution Office of the Sudan on a letter of agreement to facilitate capacity-building support to the prosecution service, including the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Crimes in Darfur. The establishment of the new Prosecution Office, following the passage of the Public Prosecution Act in June 2017, is a significant development for the rule of law in the Sudan, as the act guarantees the independence of the prosecution, which was previously placed under the Ministry of Justice. UNAMID continued to advocate for the strengthening of the rule of law and capacity-building of the justice chain to enable it to carry out its functions effectively.

37. UNAMID continued to monitor the trial involving two members of the Rizeigat militia accused of killing eight internally displaced persons in Sortony gathering site in 2016. In the general criminal court of El Geneina, four Arab suspects accused of attacking and gang-raping two teachers in Addar School were found guilty and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment and 100 lashes each. On 6 December, UNAMID, in collaboration with the Government's Directorate of Prisons and Reforms, organized the quarterly meeting of the National Prisons Development Committee in El Fasher and the mission also handed a health unit in the Shallah women's prison over to the Directorate.

38. During the reporting period, UNAMID undertook 71 field visits to monitor and report on allegations of grave violations of children's rights, trained 537 peacekeeping personnel on child rights and protection, and distributed 575 pocket cards as part of its in-mission campaign on protecting children and supporting the efforts of UNAMID, emphasizing the policy of zero tolerance for sexual relations with minors. The mission also promoted local ownership of the protection of children agenda through sensitization, capacity-building and the training of 962 members of host communities (538 men and 424 women), including 733 internally displaced persons and other community members, 141 Government police, 25 members of the national armed forces/RSF, 59 Government prison officers, and 4 members of the Sudan Liberation Army/Popular Defence (SLA/PD) led by "General" Sadiq.

39. Following an inter-agency assessment mission to East Jebel Marra, South Darfur in September, a multisectoral humanitarian response has been ongoing since mid-October. This includes the routine vaccination of children, the repair of hand pumps and rehabilitation activities at Kidhgeer school. A total of 5,609 children under 5 years of age were screened for malnutrition and the ongoing rehabilitation of 18 classrooms in Kidhgeer and Belle El Serif will benefit 1,300 school-aged children.

40. Activities related to demobilization and the reinsertion of ex-combatants continued. On 15 October, UNAMID, in collaboration with the Darfur Ceasefire Commission, Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission and the United Nations country team commenced planning for the demobilization and provision of reinsertion assistance in North Darfur for 500 ex-combatants from Doha Document signatories, the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) and the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan (JEM-Sudan).

41. UNAMID mine action teams conducted general explosive hazard assessment and disposal operations in 60 villages across Darfur, with a particular focus on areas adjacent to and within Jebel Marra. As a result, 33 hazardous areas were cleared and 3,969 items of unexploded ordnance were destroyed. The teams also disposed of 10,918 rounds of expired small arms ammunition, to remove the risk of misuse of those stocks, and delivered awareness training on explosive hazards that benefited 27,952 persons, including 9,774 men, 3,757 women, 7,732 boys and 6,689 girls. As part of the transfer of knowledge and skills, the mission continued to enhance the capacity of national authorities to assume responsibilities for mine action.

42. In collaboration with the local, state-level Ministry of Culture, Information and Communication office, the mission organized a training programme for 25 journalists on 6 and 7 November, in El Geneina, West Darfur, with the aim of building the capacity of local media to contribute towards reporting on peace in the region.

Support to the Darfur peace process and the implementation of the Doha Document

43. The Joint Special Representative, in collaboration with the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, continued to engage with the parties to the conflict in support of the Darfur peace process. Both the Government and the non-signatory movements reiterated their past positions, with differences regarding the sequencing of events: while the movements insist on signing a framework agreement, which includes the cessation of hostilities, before the commencement of earnest negotiations on substantive issues, the Government prefers the opposite. The movements have also indicated their readiness to consider the Doha Document as a starting point on condition that the resulting agreements would cover all the issues that they consider crucial to any sustainable and lasting peace in Darfur, and that they have their own independent mechanisms for implementation. In the meantime, SLA/AW remains disengaged from the Darfur mediation. On 30 November, JEM/Gibril, SLA/MM and for the first time, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Transitional Council (SLM/TC), while extending a unilateral cessation of hostilities in Darfur for two months, reiterated their commitment to the road map agreement for peace in the Sudan brokered by the High-level Implementation Panel.

44. Following the completion of the Darfur Internal Dialogue and Consultation consultations at the level of localities, UNAMID facilitated a review conference on the Dialogue and Consultation in Khartoum, on 30 October, which brought together around 300 participants representing the government, civil society and academia from across Darfur and from Khartoum. Key recommendations from the locality consultations were categorized under security, political, economic and social themes. The Government representatives acknowledged the relevance of some of the recommendations to the peace process and indicated that policies and actions had already been formulated to implement them. The meeting outlined subsequent plans for the conduct of the Dialogue and Consultation at the state, refugee and diaspora levels, as a next step, and called on the donor community to provide financial support.

Mediation of intercommunal violence

45. UNAMID, in collaboration with the United Nations country team, continued to engage with local authorities, the native administration and security committees to support mediation processes in North and West Darfur. On 17 October, in North Darfur, UNAMID, the United Nations Development Programme and a local non-governmental organization, organized a forum to encourage *hakamat* (traditional women singers) to participate in reconciliation activities in the state. The forum was attended by 10 native administration leaders and 40 women from El Serif, Saraf Omra, Kabkabiyah, Kutum and nomadic settlements around El Fasher locality. Similarly, on 31 October, UNAMID conducted a forum with 20 members from the Women for Peace Committee in Damrat Sheikh Abdulbagi, Kutum locality, to encourage the participation of women in reconciliation initiatives.

46. In the context of the start of the migration and in order to enable a peaceful season, UNAMID organized four dialogue forums in West Darfur for farmers and herders in Tonvoka, Terbiba, and Nuri returnee villages, and Birkilab nomadic village, from 6–8 November. Over 650 participants including farmers, herders, native administration leaders, women and youth groups attended the forums. Participants urged the government to enforce the rule of law so as to prevent tensions between the farmers and herders, advised herders to refrain from releasing their animals into farms and urged farmers to cultivate away from water points. They also recommended the demarcation of migratory routes and the provision of water and veterinary services along the routes.

VII. Progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the strategic report

Implementation of phase one

47. The reconfiguration of UNAMID in accordance with Security Council resolution 2363 (2017) has progressed within the phase one parameters, with 11 team sites being closed and handed over to the Government of the Sudan, the uniformed personnel repatriated and the civilian staffing review completed. The Jebel Marra task force concept of operations was adopted by the mission on 7 December 2017. The establishment of the temporary operating base in Golo is pending the allocation of land from the Government. The mission is yet to complete the state stabilization plans in collaboration with local authorities and the United Nations country team. A joint African Union-United Nations assessment of phase one of the reconfiguration took place from 7–17 November, in line with paragraph 6 of resolution 2363 (2017), and a joint report detailing the assessment observations and recommendations will be submitted to the Council under separate cover on 2 January 2018.

Joint fundraising strategy for sustaining peace in Darfur

48. The Integrated Strategic Framework for Darfur, covering the period from July 2017 to June 2019, was formally adopted by the mission and the United Nations country team in September. It identified three key priorities for the United Nations to consolidate peace in Darfur: the rule of law and human rights, durable solutions and peacebuilding for human security. UNAMID and the country team are developing a joint fundraising strategy for the implementation of the framework, with the aim of scaling up country team resources to undertake peace consolidation activities in the next two years and longer-term development in Darfur.

VIII. Observations

49. While I am encouraged by the positive developments in the area of security and by the progress of the weapons collection campaign, it is important to ensure that all the communities, including the internally displaced persons, benefit from the secure environment this is meant to create, and that the rights of citizens are duly respected in the process. In the same context, steps towards the disarmament of armed militia are promising and should be pursued in line with the provisions of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

50. Progress towards achieving a comprehensive peace through a negotiated political settlement remains elusive. As the Doha Document represents a comprehensive framework towards a political solution, I call on the rebel movements to show vision, pragmatism and courage to ensure that the Darfur people benefit from its implementation.

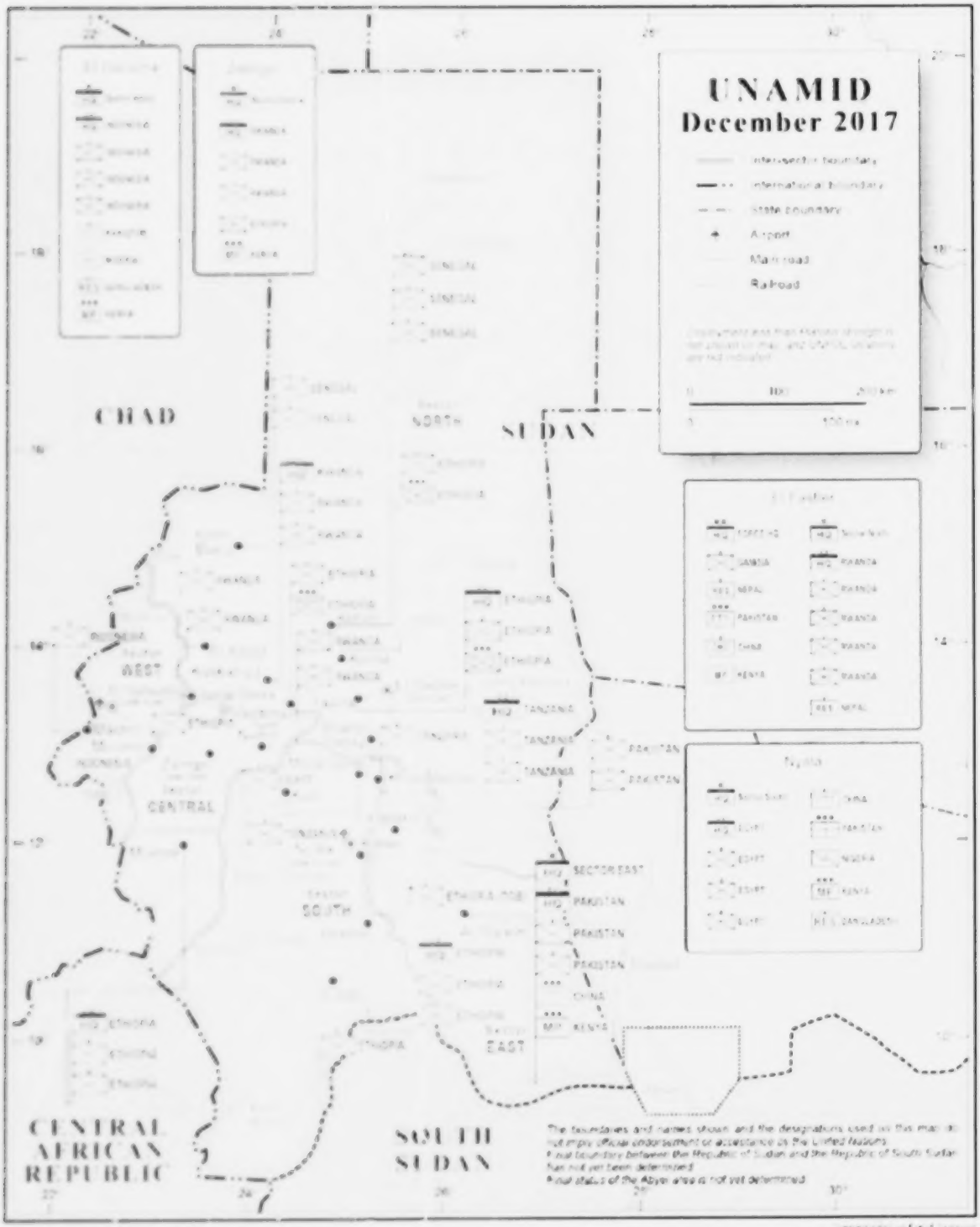
51. Addressing the needs of the internally displaced persons and finding durable solutions for them remain priorities for the Government and the international community in the Sudan. In this context, I call for realistic solutions that take into account the rights and the interests of the internally displaced persons, and urge the Government to fully engage with them in ensuring their access to land, to natural resources and to services. In the same vein, while acknowledging the contributions of Member States towards creating the necessary conditions for resettlement and/or settlement, I urge the international community to assist the Darfur state governments in stabilizing the situation, especially by creating a conducive environment for the genuine reintegration of internally displaced persons into communities through the strengthening of security and the establishment of rule of law institutions and services.

52. I call on the Government to build on the progress made in the restoration and promotion of the rule of law to assist in rebuilding the trust in governance, which was lost as a consequence of the armed conflict. I wish to recommend to the Government to seize the opportunity of close collaboration with UNAMID and the United Nations country team so as to enhance its capacity to effectively and legitimately carry out and eventually take over the core functions of protecting civilians and promoting human rights.

53. As the mission's mandate calls for a two-pronged approach that entails the operationalization of the Jebel Marra task force with a temporary operating base in Golo, and stabilization for the rest of Darfur, we will do our utmost to finalize, with Darfur state governments, the state stabilization plans, based on state-specific priorities in accordance with the Doha Document, thus ensuring Darfuri ownership of the process and relevance to the realities on the ground.

54. While some progress has been made in the issuance of visas and in addressing bureaucratic hindrances, I call upon the Government to further expedite those processes as well as to ensure the release of remaining containers, by facilitating customs clearances and the certificate of tax exemption in accordance with the status-of-forces agreement. Likewise, I appeal to the Government to formalize the allocation of land for the establishment of the Golo temporary operational base.

55. I would like to conclude by thanking the Joint Special Representative, Jeremiah Nyamane Kingsley Mamabolo, and all the personnel of UNAMID, the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community, who continue to work tirelessly to improve the lives of the people of Darfur. I commend my Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan, Nicholas Haysom, and the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, and the former President of Nigeria, Abdulsalami Abubakar, of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, for their continuous efforts to resolve the conflict in Darfur.


UNAMID
December 2017
CHAD
SUDAN
SOUTH SUDAN
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
WEST
CENTRAL
SOUTH
EAST
SECTOR EAST
PAKISTAN
ETHIOPIA
TANZANIA
KENYA
CHINA
RWANDA
NEPAL
ZAMBIA
EGYPT
BANGLADESH
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
* Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined.
** Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.